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BOOK REVIEWS

The American Negro in the World War. By EMMETT J. SCOTT, Special Assistant to the Secretary of War. The Negro Historical Publishing Company, Washington, D. C., 1919.

Mr. Scott's account of the *Negro in the World War* is one of a number of works presenting the achievements of the Negroes during the great upheaval. Kelly Miller, W. Allison Sweeney and others have preceded him in publishing volumes in this same field. The account written by Kelly Miller is apparently of dubious authorship. It is but a common-place popular sketch of the war supplemented by one or two essays bearing the stamp of controversial writing peculiar to Kelly Miller. W. Allison Sweeney's work undertakes to make a more continuous historical sketch of the achievements from year to year while at the same time guided by the topical plan. At times the author is lofty in his treatment and equally as often trivial. To say that Miller's and Sweeney's works are not scientific does not exactly cover the ground. They do not well measure up to the standard of the average popular history.

Mr. Scott's history is far from being a definitive one, as the purpose of the author was rather to popularize the achievements of the Negro soldiers. In addition to giving the current historical comment accessible in newspapers and magazines, Mr. Scott has incorporated into his work a large number of official documents accessible only to some one, who like himself, was connected with the War Department during the conflict. It has another value, moreover, in that it well sets forth the reaction of an intelligent federal official of color on the thousands of events daily transpiring around him.

The author undertakes to connect the Negro with the fundamental cause of the war in that race prejudice was its source. He shows how fortunate it was to have Negro troops as the first of the national guard to be adequately equipped for immediate service and to occupy the post of honor in guarding the White House and the national capital, by order of the President of the United States. His own appointment and his work as the Special Assistant to the Secretary of War as an official recognition of the Negroes' interest in the war are made the nucleus around which the facts of the work

are organized. How the Negroes figured in the national army, how Negro soldiers and officers were trained, and how they were treated in the camps, all bring to light information for which the public has long been waiting. After giving passing mention to the black soldiers in the armies of the European nations the author directs his attention to the Negro regiments overseas. Special chapters are devoted to the achievements of the 367th, 368th, 370th, 371st and 372d regiments. The behavior of the Negroes in battle is sketched in the chapter entitled the Negro as a Fighter.

While dealing primarily with actual war, the author has been careful to give adequate space to agencies which helped to make the war possible. The valuable service rendered by the Negroes in the Service of Supply constitutes one of the most interesting chapters of the book. Whereas these Negroes were actually conscripted to labor in spite of the declaration of the War Department to the contrary, they accepted their lot with the spirit of loyalty and performed one of the great tasks of the war in getting supplies to Europe and furnishing the army with them in France. Negro labor in war times, Negro women in war work, the loyalty of the Negro civilians, and the social welfare agencies are also treated. Finally the author takes up an important question: *Did the Negro get a square deal?* In a position to know the many problems confronting the Negroes drawn into the army, Mr. Scott has brought forward in this final chapter adequate evidence to prove that the Negro did not get a square deal.

The Heart of a Woman. By GEORGIA DOUGLAS JOHNSON, with an introduction by WILLIAM STANLEY BRAITHWAITE. The Cornhill Co., Boston, 1918. Pp. 62.

In these days of *vers libre* and the deliberate straining for poetic effect these lyrics of Mrs. Johnson bring with them a certain sense of relief and freshness. Also the utter absence of the material theme makes an appeal. We are all weary of the war note and are glad to return to the softer pipings of old time themes—love, friendship, longing, despair—all of which are set forth in *The Heart of a Woman*.

The book has artistry, but it is its sincerity which gives it its value. Here are the little sharp experiences of life mirrored poignantly, sometimes feverishly, always truly. Each lyric is an instantaneous photograph of one of the many moments in existence which